

# WEST VIRGINIA CODE: §17-2E-5

## **§17-2E-5. Telecommunications carrier initiated construction and joint use.**

(a) The Division of Highways shall provide for the proportionate sharing of costs between telecommunications carriers for joint trenching or trench sharing based on the amount of conduit innerduct space or excess conduit that is authorized in the agreements entered into pursuant to this article. If the Division plans to use the trench, it shall pay its proportional share unless it is utilizing the trench as in-kind payment for use of the right-of-way.

(b) Upon application for a permit, the carrier will notify, by email, the West Virginia Broadband Enhancement Council and all other carriers on record with the West Virginia Broadband Enhancement Council of the application. Other carriers have 30 calendar days to notify the applicant if they wish to share the applicant's trench. This requirement extends to all underground construction technologies.

(c) The carrier shall also meet the following conditions for a permit:

(1) The telecommunications carrier will be required to place, at its sole expense, a Class II legal advertisement, in accordance with §59-3-2(a) of this code, and of a form and content approved by the Division of Highways, in the local project area newspaper, in the Charleston newspaper, on industry and the Division of Highways' websites, and within other pertinent media, announcing the general scope of the proposed installation within the right-of-way and providing competing telecommunications carriers the opportunity to timely express an interest in installing additional telecommunication facilities during the initial installation. The legal advertisement is to run at least two consecutive weeks, and the telecommunications carrier is to notify the Division of any interest of other parties received.

(2) If a competing telecommunications carrier expresses interest in participating in the project, an agreement between the two (or more) telecommunications carriers will be executed by those entities, outlining the responsibilities and financial obligations of each, with respect to the installation within the right-of-way. A copy of the executed agreement shall be provided to the Division of Highways.

(3) The telecommunications carrier that placed the legal advertisement is responsible for resolving in good faith all disputes between any competing telecommunications carriers that timely responded to the advertisement and that wishes to install facilities within the same portion of the rights-of-way to be occupied. Should a dispute arise between the initial telecommunications carrier and a competing telecommunications carrier, the initial telecommunications carrier will attempt to mediate the dispute. Any dispute that is not resolved by the telecommunications carriers shall be adjudicated by the Public Service Commission.

(d) If two or more telecommunications carriers are required or authorized to share a single trench, each carrier in the trench must share the cost and benefits of the trench in a fair, reasonable, competitively neutral, and nondiscriminatory manner. This requirement extends to all underground construction technologies.

(e) The Commissioner of the Division of Highways shall promulgate rules governing the relationship between the telecommunications carriers, as hereinafter provided in this article.